



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:
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Agenda Item Number: {{item.number}}

Agenda Date: November 16, 2022

In Control: Planning Commission Meeting

DEPARTMENT: Development Services Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Michael Shannon

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:

SUBJECT:

Variance Request to mitigate for removal of significant and heritage trees in excess of the 80% and 100% preservation requirement of significant and heritage trees respectively within both the 100-year Floodplain & Environmentally Sensitive Areas in place under the 2010 Tree Preservation Ordinance

SUMMARY:

The Development Services Department (DSD) reviewed the information presented in Mr. Richard Mott's letter dated October 31, 2022. The Unified Development Code (UDC) – Article V, Section 35-523 (h), 100-Year Floodplain(s) and Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) states that, "Significant trees shall be preserved at eighty (80) percent preservation within both the 100-year floodplains and Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA). Heritage trees shall be preserved at one hundred (100) percent preservation within both the 100-year floodplain and environmentally sensitive areas. Mitigation shall be prohibited in floodplains and environmentally sensitive area except when a variance is granted by the Planning Commission."

The applicant is requesting a Variance Request to mitigate for removal of significant and heritage trees in excess of the 80% significant tree and 100% heritage tree preservation requirements within the 100-year Floodplain and ESA in place under the 2010 Tree Preservation Ordinance for the Sapphire Grove Phase 2A subdivision. The proposed project focuses on developing 1,000 single family residential lots for Sapphire Grove Units 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 3A, 3B. DSD staff does agree with the applicant's request to mitigate for the removal of significant and heritage trees below respective 80% and 100% tree preservation limits for the following reasons:

Existing site conditions – Due to existing site conditions and design and layout constraints, the project is unable to preserve the minimum 80% significant and 100% of heritage trees within both the 100-year Floodplain and ESA. The proposed removal of the significant and heritage trees is needed to ensure proper drainage from Units 1A, 2A, 3A and 3B. the proposed plan will direct flow into the lowest topographic point in the area which is in Unit 2A. The channels and retention pond area were optimally designed in order to preserve as many trees as possible. These channels are necessary to convey and contain surface water flows and reduce or eliminate flooding in Units 1A, 2A, 3A and 3B and other areas within the project. As a result of the earthwork required to improve the 100-year Floodplain and ESA, the proposed tree preservation ratios are as follows:

Environmentally Sensitive Area

- Total number of existing small species inches: 68"
- Total number of inches small species removed: 21"
- Total number of inches small species preserved: 47"
- Preservation small species percentage: 69%
- Total number of existing significant inches: 513.5"
- Total number of inches significant removed: 299.5"
- Total number of inches significant preserved: 214"
- Preservation significant percentage: 42%
- Total number of existing heritage inches: 0"
- Total number of inches heritage removed: 0"
- Total number of inches heritage preserved: 0"
- Preservation heritage percentage: 0%

Floodplain

- Total number of existing small species inches: 375"
- Total number of inches small species removed: 206"
- Total number of inches small species preserved: 169"
- Preservation small species percentage: 45%
- Total number of existing significant inches: 1096"
- Total number of inches significant removed: 716"
- Total number of inches significant preserved: 380"
- Preservation significant percentage: 35%
- Total number of existing heritage inches: 55"
- Total number of inches heritage removed: 55"
- Total number of inches heritage preserved: 0"
- Preservation heritage percentage: 0%

Tree mitigation– The total project mitigation, to include non-floodplain, floodplain, and ESA, is

2,663 inches. The mitigation required for the removal of significant and heritage trees within both the 100-year Floodplain and ESA is 997 inches. The proposal to plant 3,000 (2-inch caliper) new trees will provide an additional 337 inches above the minimum mitigation requirements and provide 2,890,761 square feet of final tree canopy cover which is 36,505 square feet above the minimum requirements for 38.5%. In addition, the 3,000 planted trees will increase species diversity including small and medium native tree species per the San Antonio Recommended Plant List.

DSD staff recommends approval of the Tree Variance based on the existing conditions of the site, design constraints, and the applicant exceeding mitigation by 337 inches and canopy requirements by 36,505 square feet by planting small and medium native species trees. The proposed Variance Request meets the intent and spirit of the Tree Ordinance therefore, staff recommends approval.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Council District: ETJ

Filing Date: August 17, 2022

Applicant by Richard Mott, P.E., Vice President of Land Development, Lennar Homes and Construction, LTD.

Staff Coordinator: Charles Johnson, Senior Plans Examiner, 210-207-0170, Charles.johnson2@sanantonio.gov

ISSUE:

The applicants project proposes removal of significant and heritage trees in the Floodplain and ESA and does not meet the required minimum preservation of 80% Significant and 100% Heritage trees respectively within the 100-year Floodplain and Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

ALTERNATIVES:

Planning Commission may decide to deny the variance, which means the applicant will have to provide additional mitigation or comply with the Tree Preservation Ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION:

DSD staff recommends approval of the proposed variance.